

## Message Text

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ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 NEA-11 ISO-00 SAB-02 CIAE-00  
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02  
SS-15 ICA-11 ACDA-12 IO-13 EB-08 NRC-05 OES-07  
SOE-02 DOE-15 CEQ-01 /152 W  
-----093832 232337Z /70

P 232218Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7156  
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
DA WASHDC  
CNO WASHDC  
PANCANAL  
USSOUTHCOM

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E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: MUNC, OCLR, UK, US, PN, PQ  
SUBJECT: BRITISH NPW TRANSIT OF PANAMA CANAL

REF: STATE 125914

1. EMBOFF HAS DISCUSSED THE PLANNED TRANSIT WITH THE PANAMA CANAL COMPANY, WITH THE U.S. NAVAL STATION COMMANDER, AND THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR. THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR HAS INFORMED THE EMBASSY OF THE FOLLOWING:

A. THERE HAS BEEN ABSOLUTELY NO PUBLICITY ABOUT THIS VISIT, PARTICULARLY ABOUT THE POSSIBLE PRESENCE OF A NPW; NONE IS INTENDED UNTIL THE VISIT IS OVER.

B. HE HAS INVITED GENERAL TORRIJOS TO LUNCH ABOARD ONE OF THE VESSELS, AND THE INVITATION HAS BEEN ACCEPTED. NO MENTION HAS BEEN MADE TO TORRIJOS

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ABOUT ANY OTHER TENTATIVE PLANS RELATED TO THE VISIT.

C. HE AND GENERAL TORRIJOS AGREED THAT GENERAL MCAULIFFE AND GOVERNOR PARFITT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE INVITATION TO LUNCH. THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR QUOTED TORRIJOS AS SAYING, "WE MUST GET CLOSER TO THE AMERICANS."

\$. HE HAS DISCUSSED THE TRANSIT AT LENGTH WITH GOVERNOR PARFITT AND THE PANAMA CANAL COMPANY MARINE DIRECTOR.

E. NOTHING WILL BE DONE ON THIS MATTER WITHOUT FULL CONSULTATION WITH THE USG.

2. AS OF MAY 22, A TENTATIVE SCHEDULE CALLS FOR THE TRANSIT ON JLY 9 OF 8 OR 9 VESSELS, BEGINNING AT ABOUT 0630 AND TERMINATING IN MID-TO LATE AFTERNOON THE SAME DAY. THE PLAN (PARA 2 REFTEL) INVOLVING DEBARKATION FROM THE SUBMARINE WHILE IT IS IN MIRAFLORES LOCKS HAS BEEN SCRUBBED DUE TO SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS. SEVERAL OTHER POSSIBLE SCENARIOS ARE UNDER CONSIDERATION. AS REPORTED FROM ALL SIDES, THE LOGISTICS OF VIP TRANSFERS TO AND FROM A SUBMARINE ARE EXTREMELY COMPLICATED, PARTICULARLY BECAUSE OF SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS FOR BOTH THE VESSEL ITSELF AND THE VIPS INVOLVED. A FINAL DECISION ON A SCENARIO IS STILL PENDING. THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR HAS DISCUSSED THE TRANSIT WITH THE US NAVAL STATION COMMANDER, AS WELL AS WITH GOVERNOR PARFITT AND THE MARINE DIRECTOR.

3. THE CONSENSUS HERE IS THAT, ALTHOUGH THE BRITISH  
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AMBASSADOR INDICATES THAT THE UK INTENDS TO TREAT THE TRANSIT AS A NORMAL ONE, THE VERY FACT THAT GENERAL TORRIJOS IS TO BE INVOLVED IN THE EVENT WILL CALL ATTENTION TO IT. EVEN IF IT IS NOT ADVERTISED, THE PRESENCE OF A NPW PROBABLY WILL BECOME COMMON KNOWLEDGE. BY THE SAME TOKEN, HOWEVER, NUMEROUS U.S. NPWS HAVE TRANSITED THE CANAL WITHOUT INCIDENT. THE POSSIBILITY EXISTS, OF COURSE, THAT SOME OPPOSITIONIST MAY SEIZE ON THE EVENT AND GENERAL TORRIJOS' PARTICIPATION IN IT AS A MEANS OF CRITICIZING TORRIJOS, BUT HIS IS UNLIKELY.

4. CONCERNINE PROTOCOL (PARA 4 REFTEL), THE FACT THAT GENERAL TORRIJOS AGREES TO INVITING GENERAL MCAULIFFE AND GOVERNOR PARFITT TO THE LUNCHEON BEING PLANNED ALLEVIATES ANY PROBLEM AS FAR AS THE CANAL ZONE IS CONCERNED. AMBASSADOR JORDEN HAS ALSO BEEN INVITED TO THE LUNCHEON. ACCORDING TO PANCANAL, THE GOVERNOR WOLD WANT TO BE PRESENT AT ANY ACTIVITIES INVOLVING GENERAL TORRIJOS IN THE ZONE. JORDEN

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** CANALS, NUCLEAR POWERED SHIPS, MILITARY VISITS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 23 may 1978  
**Decapton Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decapton Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
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**Litigation History:**  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 78 STATE 125914  
**Retention:** 0  
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**Subject:** BRITISH NPW TRANSIT OF PANAMA CANAL  
**TAGS:** MNUC, OCLR, UK, US, PN, PQ  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014